

**NEWS – CONGRESSMAN PETE STARK**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Monday, February 14, 2011

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**STARK STATEMENT ON THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET**

WASHINGTON – Rep. Pete Stark (D-CA), ranking member of the House Ways and Means Health Subcommittee, today released the following statement on the President's proposed budget:

"The President today outlined a tough budget. I wouldn't have made all of the same choices. For example, I think we can get more savings out of defense rather than cutting vital programs that working Americans depend on, like energy assistance for poor families and grants to localities to help bring communities out of poverty. But, I commend the President for trying to balance the opposing interests of reducing our deficit and continuing to meet people's needs.

"From my position as the top Democrat on the House Ways and Means Health Subcommittee, I am pleased that the President was able to pay for reforms to the Medicare Physician Payment formula for two years, without cutting benefits or raising premiums or cost sharing. We cannot reduce the deficit on the backs of senior citizens and people with disabilities, and I am glad that the President's budget recognizes that.

"The President made difficult decisions in a more responsible way than Republicans have in their Continuing Resolution being brought to the House floor this week. The Republicans' cuts have all the thoughtfulness and responsibility of a child smashing down building blocks. Their massive mindless cuts range from eliminating vouchers to help homeless veterans, to stopping the government from being able to process Medicare payments to doctors and hospitals."

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